

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05

TRSE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /070 W

-----078759 052152Z /73

O 052124Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9427

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4248

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM CI

SUBJECT: HUNGER STRIKERS COMPLETE TWO WEEKS

REF: SANTIAGO 4203

1. THE CARDINAL REPORTEDLY DOES NOT YET HAVE A FINAL AND FIRM ACCEPTANCE FROM THE GOC ON HIS PROPOSAL TO SET UP A COMMISSION TO LOOK INTO THE PROBLEM OF THE MISSING PERSONS. WE ARE TOLD THAT THE PROPOSAL CALLS FOR A THREE-MAN COMMISSION, WITH THE CHURCH AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ABLE TO PROPOSE NAMES TO PINOCHET FOR HIS APPOINTMENT. AS OF THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 5, THE TIMING AND SEQUENCE OF ACTIONS RESULTING IN SETTING UP SUCH A COMMISSION REMAIN UNRESOLVED. THE CARDINAL WOULD LIKE TO CONVINCE THE HUNGER STRIKERS TO TERMINATE THE STRIKE ON THE BASIS OF A FIRM COMMITMENT FROM THE GOC TO HIM TO SET UP THE COMMISSION. AFTER THE STRIKE ENDS, THE GOC WOULD MAKE THE APPROPRIATE ANNOUNCEMENT. THE STRIKERS APPARENTLY CONTINUE TO INSIST ON A PRIOR ANNOUNCEMENT.

2. ACCORDING TO THE VICARIATE OF SOLIDARITY 187 PERSONS REMAIN IN THE HUNGER STRIKE. THIS INCLUDES 31 PRISONERS
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AT THE SANTIAGO PENITENTIARY AND 14 PERSONS IN CONCEPCION (ELSEWHERE REPORTED AS 10). IT ALSO INCLUDES THE FIVE PERSONS WHO WERE AT THE ICRC OFFICE BUT HAVE NOW ALL EITHER BEEN TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL OR ARE AT HOME. ONE OF THE UNICEF NINE HAS ALSO GONE TO THE HOSPITAL. THE REMAINING EIGHT ARE RECEIVING JUICE AND MILK AT THE OFFICE ON DOCTORS' ORDERS. THE BALANCE OF STRIKERS, 128, ARE

LOCATED AT EIGHT SANTIAGO CHURCHES. SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN RECEIVING INTRAVENOUS FEEDING.

3. THE REVEREND WILLIAM SLOAN COFFIN VISITED THE EMBASSY THIS MORNING. HE IS HERE AT THE REQUEST OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL GROUP WITH ONE REPRESENTATIVE EACH FROM FRANCE, ITALY, BELGIUM AND WEST GERMANY. NOT ALL HAD ARRIVED AS OF OUR MEETING WITH COFFIN. HE WAS GOING TO BE SEEING VICARIATE PERSONNEL AND, PERHAPS, THE CARDINAL LATER IN THE DAY JUNE 5.

4. COMMENT: WE ARE TOLD BY SOURCE CLOSE TO THE CARDINAL THAT HE SEES HIS ROLE AS THAT OF MEDIATOR BETWEEN THE STRIKERS AND THE GOVERNMENT, NOT AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RELATIVES. HE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE POLITICAL INTERESTS AT PLAY AND IS DETERMINED TO AVOID LENDING THE AUTHORITY OF HIS POSITION TO SUCH INTERESTS -- WHICH WOULD FURTHER HARM CHANCES FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE PRESENT IMPASSE. IN THIS REGARD THE CARDINAL BELIEVES THAT INTERVENTION AT THIS TIME BY EMBASSIES ON BEHALF OF THE RELATIVES' DEMANDS WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL. REPORTEDLY SOME OF THE SCANDINAVIAN EMBASSIES HAVE RECEIVED SUCH INSTRUCTIONS. LANDAU

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, MISSING PERSONS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SANTIA04248
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780235-0046
Format: TEL
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780695/aaaadefj.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 427f3d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SANTIAGO 4203
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2488607
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUNGER STRIKERS COMPLETE TWO WEEKS
TAGS: SHUM, CI
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/427f3d92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014